

NAME: Kanemasu, Kimiyo DATE OF BIRTH: 11/3/1897 PLACE OF BIRTH: Hiroshima  
Age: 76 Sex: F Marital Status: W Education: High school

## PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 8/1917 Age: 20 M.S.P.B. Port of entry: San Fran.  
Occupation/s: 1. Laundry Business 2. Florist shop owner 3. Housewife  
Place of residence: 1. Oakland, Ca. 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Community organizations/activities: \_\_\_\_\_

## EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Tanforan  
Name of relocation center: Topaz, Utah  
Dispensation of property: Alameda Church Names of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held in camp: 1. Waitress 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Left camp to go to: Chicago, Illinois

## POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1952  
Address/es: 1. Chicago, Illinois (8 yrs) 2. Sacramento, California  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian Church  
Activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 3/7/74 Place: Sacramento, Ca

*Translator: Sumie Carter*

Name: Kimiyo Kanemasu

Birth Date: Nov. 3, 1897

Birth Place: Hiroshima Ken

The time of entry into the States:

How old was she when she came to the States: 19 years old

Major Occupation: House wife

Camp: Topaz, Utah

Interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe

Interview Date: March 7, 1974

Translator: Sumie Carter

Typist: Sumie Carter

Q. Please state your name.

A. Kanemasu, Kimiyo.

Q. What year were you born?

A. 1897, November the third.

Q. How old are you now?

A. I am seventy six.

Q. Where in Japan were you born?

A. In Hiroshima Prefecture.

Q. How much education did you receive in Japan?

A. I only finished high-school.

Q. How many years did you go to school?

A. I attended six years of grade school and two years of intermediate school. Usually you must attend four years of high-school, but I took the test and I only needed three years to finish high-school.

Minister, You must be very intelligent.

Mrs. Kanemasu. I don't think so.

Q. What do you remember about your school life?

A. I wasn't an honor roll student. In order to be on the honor roll, you must excell in three areas, effort, scholarship and citizenship. I did well in effort and citizenship but I couldn't become an honor roll student.

Q. What were the happy things that you remember?

A. In my school years, I didn't know any hardship. I enjoyed going to school.

Q. Do you remember the teachers?

A. Yes, I remember them. In those days we listened to the teachers and obeyed them. I lived very close to the school. I came home for lunch.

Q Did you do that when you were in high-school?

A. No, high-school wasn't near to where I lived. I stayed in the dormitory.

Q. What was the hardest thing for you in those days?

A. After four years of grade school, I was an upper class student all of the time. When I was in seventh grade I attended a school which was far away from where I lived, about two miles I think. There were only four of us girls. There were lots of boys. We had to walk every day all of the way to school. There were a few bullies among the boys. They were mean. I disliked the boys, but there was not much hardship that I can recall while I went school.

Q. What did your father do for a living?

A. He was born in Ganji-Gannen(1865?) He was the first to become head of the village. (Son-Cho, A position established in Ma<sup>i</sup>er

Q. Was his occupation that of head of the village?

A. Yes. He did operate a general store also. In the end he extended credit to the many people who couldn't pay their bill. The store went bankrupt. The people who got credit from my father seemed to think that it was a gift. When I was a child the business was not too bad. After a while we became poor. At the time I was about to be married things were bad. Perhaps not so much now days, but when I was getting married things were difficult like the families' <sup>social</sup> class had to match.

Q. What was your father like?

A. He was very kind. Kind to his own family as well as to strangers. Mondo, was my maiden name. The neighbor used to say "Mr. Mondo is good to everyone."

Q. What was your mother like?

A. She was a very generous kind hearted woman also. In a way their generosity brought on own bankruptcy. I think that she did lots of charity work.

Q. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

A. I have two sisters and a brother, four of us in all.

Q. What was your family's religion?

A. We belong to the Shingon sect. It is a part of the Budist<sup>dh</sup> religion. My family were not strong believers. We went to the temple once a year.

Q. Did you ever hear about Christianity?

A. Yes, one of my relative went to Tokyo and became a Christian, he was a judge. After he became a Christian he said "I could not judge another." He resigned his post and moved to Chigasaki. ( a prefecture in Chiba, near Tokyo).

Q Did he practice law in Chigasaki?

A. No, he became ill and died shortly after. He was the first one to become a Christian among my relatives.

Q. What was the most memorable thing that you remember when you were a young maiden?

A. Let me see..... in what area?

Q. About your family, your friends?

A. I had a real good friend. I had known her since I was little . She quit going to school after the 7th grade. I haven't heard from her for a long time now. For ~~women~~<sup>men</sup> it is somehow hard to keep a good relationship for a long time like men do.

Q. After you graduated from high-school what did you do?

A. ~~(I was eighteen. I came to America very shortly after that )~~<sup>Don't need</sup>  
I was eighteen. I came to America when I was twenty.

Q. You mean you came here as a bride?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you tell me more about it?

A. I came here as a picture bride. We exchanged pictures.

My future father-in-law and mother-in-law were in Japan.

They had lived in America. They were in Japan then. I met them and they thought that I was alright. We were married in Japan after we finished the necessary paper work, then I came to America.

We were married again here. A Buddhist monk came and we had a Buddhist ceremony. It was a very risky thing to marry a man you have never met. Now that I think about it.

Q. How did you come to know about your husband?

A. We were related in some way. One of my relatives persuaded me to marry him. I had two older sisters. I knew that there were lots of expenses for my parents when they got married. I thought that it would be nice for my parents if it didn't cost them much for my wedding. I had heard that America was a good place to live. I had decided to come to America. My husband waited for me here.

Q. How did you come here? Did you come with his parents?

A. No, they remained in Japan. They never came back to America after that.

Q. What was your first impression when you saw your husband's picture?

A. I thought that he was rather nice looking. Now it is ridiculous to think about what I did.

Q. Did you decide to come to America then?

A. Yes, such a foolish thing when I think about it now. My parents said that if I wanted it that way it was all right with them.

Q. What kind of people were on board the ship when you were coming here.

A. I came with a family who had lived here before. Their name was Hosokawa. They were very devoted Christians. They passed away sometime ago. There was Mr. Shimazu. He was an officer of the YMCA in Chicago. He was well known among the immigrants. He took care of us when we needed it. His wife was my room-mate. I consider that I was fortunate. She took good care of me on the voyage.

Q. What year was it?

A. 1917, in August.

Q. Were there many picture brides like you?

A. Yes, there were. The ship's name was "Kureya-Maru."

We were told that we could not come to America as an immigrant in the near future so that there were many Japanese who took the trip before 1924.

Q. Where did you land?

A. In San Francisco. My husband was there to meet me.

Q. Did you recognize him at first sight?

A. Strange, but yes I did.

Q. What did you think?

A. I just thought "Oh!" It wasn't<sup>9</sup> surprise to me.

Q. Were you glad that he was there?

A. Yes, I was. He had two sisters living here then. They came to see me also. My first impression of the country was of the bad houses, very old fashioned old houses. They had high steps. I never thought that America had houses like that. When I was in Japan I thought that all houses in America were modern.

Q. Where was this?

A. It was in San Francisco, I went to Oakland from San Francisco.

Q. What was your first impression of America?

A. I thought that it was a large country. It looked like a nice place to live in. The hard thing for me was that I couldn't speak any English. I couldn't talk when I wanted to. My husband said to me "I'll teach you. You'll learn in no time." It is hard to learn things from your own husband.

Q. Did you stop over in Hawaii?

A. Yes, I did. I stayed there one night.

Q. How was it? Did you like Hawaii?

A. Let me see.....I remember that I was not impressed by Hawaii.

Q. Did you go to the immigration office? I believe it was on Angel Island.

A. Yes, I did. I don't remember well anymore. I think I stayed there for a night.

Q. Did you worry a little?

A. No, not at all. There was a Caucasian woman who worked there who spoke good Japanese and she took care<sup>of</sup> us well. I forgot her name.

Q. How long did you stay in San Francisco?

A. I went to Oakland immediately.

Q. How old was your husband then?

A. He was twenty four.

Q. Were you nineteen?

A. No, I was twenty.

Q. You and your husband were not very different in age?

A. You are correct.

Q. What kind of house did you live in, in Oakland?

A. It was a big house. He managed a laundry business with his family. The house was big but it was a far different house from what I had dreamed of while I was in Japan.

Q. How was it different?

A. We had to share the living room, parlor, kitchen, hallway and the bath-room. We all had a large room of our own. It wasn't the American house that I had dreamed of while I was in Japan. I lived in the house for a long time.

Q. What do you mean a different house. It was different from what you dreamed of.....You mean because you had to worry about the others?

A. Yes, it wasn't like having your own.

Q. Would it have been alright if it had been only for your family?

A. Yes, I don't think that any family lives like that anymore.

Q. How long did you ha<sup>ve</sup> the laundry business?

A. Let me see. We had it for a long time. We were with my husband's brother. Just a few years before World War II we sold the business.

Q. Then you were in the laundry business for over twenty years?

A. Yes, after that we started a florist business.

Q. Who did?

A. My husband. After the children were born he decided that he would be better off if he was in a business by himself. He worked as an apprentice at a florist and then he went into the business by himself. We opened a store not too far from where we lived.

Q. What year was this? How many years had it been since you came to America then?

A. What year was it... After ten....perhaps twenty years.

Q. What were the attitudes of the Americans towards you in those days?

A. They weren't bad at all. I don't have any recollection of bad feelings.

Q. Did you work?

A. Yes, I worked with my husband.

Q. You worked in the laundry and in the florist shop?

A. Yes.

Q. It was a florist shop?

A. That is right.

Q. Do you remember any sad things?

A. The sad things were...we didn't know till we were in the business. We made lots of mistakes. We estimated too much and bought too many flowers. We couldn't <sup>s</sup>ell them and the flowers were gone.

Q. Were you in business till World War II?

A. My husband died before the war.

Q. When did your husband pass away?

A. In 1934.

Q. Do you remember the depression?

A. Yes, I do. We had a hard time. Flowers were none essential thing so the depression hit us harder than some other businesses.

Q. You had a hard time making ends meet?

A. Yes, indeed. We had no help so we could get by. We felt the depression more than the others because like I said you don't have to buy flowers.

Q. What was the cause of your husband's death?

A. He had lots of worries. He died rather suddenly. The cause was infection of the brain. I was pregnant at the time. I was carrying my fifth child. The baby was born two months after my husband's death.

Q. What did your family do after your husband passed away.

A. I kept my family.

Q. Did you work?

A. Yes. There was the business that we had already started. I could not work anywhere else since my children were still small. My nephew came and helped me sometimes.

Q. How old was your oldest child then?

Q. fifteen or fourteen. I don't think that he was quite fifteen.

Q. Did you seek welfare?

A. No. In order to qualify for welfare I had to quit the business. I decided to continue the business.

Q. It must have been hard on you?

A. I had a difficult time. It was hard to realize then but looking back on my past I would say it was the hardest time in my life.

Q. What do you remember most about it?

A. I made some mistake on the orders. I delivered the flowers a day late. I thought that it would be alright if I sent them the next morning. It was too late for the occasion. I felt very badly about it. I tried to keep my promise most of the times.

Q. Who were your customers? The Japanese?

A. No. They were all Caucasians.

Q. What were the happy things that you remember while your husband was alive?

A. Let me see... I joined the church in 1926 while my husband was still alive. After I joined the church my husband joined also. We were having financial difficulty but believeing in God gave us peace in our mind and also showed me the way to raise the children.

Q. Do you remember anything funny?

A. I hardly remember anything funny. There must have been something. I just don't remember.

Q. How about trouble or difficulty?

A. Most of my trouble was how to make ends meet. It was financial trouble.

Q. Did you earn enough to support yourself and five children?

A. Person who owned the shop helped me. He gave me a room in the shop. I didn't have to pay for a house which made it easier for me.

Q. The person who owned your shop was a Caucasian?

A. Yes, he was a German. He was very kind to us.

Q. You kept the business till the outbreak of the war?

A. Yes, I did. The war started in the early part of December. My business was down despite the holiday season. I was afraid for our lives too.

Q. You mean you thought that perhaps someone might harm you?

A. Yes. My family was only myself and the children. Most of my neighbors were very sympathetic. They helped me in many ways when I had to leave for the camp.

Q. What were your feelings on the day of Pearl Harbor?

A. I felt very sad, helpless. All of my children were eating lunch after Sunday school. We turned on the radio and heard the news. We were shocked and sad. It seemed so sudden.

Q. What were the feelings of your children?

A. They were sad.

Q. How old were they then?

A. The oldest one was fifteen or sixteen.

Q. Soon after Pearl Harbor you were limited in your movements weren't you?

A. You are right.

Q. How long did you continue your business after the war started.

A. I continued it about two months. I went to the camp in April.

Q. You quit your business around Feb. or March?

A. I don't remember exactly....Somewhere around that.

Q. How did the customers act?

A. Less of them came.

Q. You rented the place?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember how much the rent was for a month?

A. Let me think.....\$50. I don't remember exactly.

Q. How much did you need to get by a month? What I mean is what was the cost of food, education, clothes etc.?

A. I don't remember clearly. My children had started to go to junior high school. Perhaps \$50. I had no money to save.

Looking back now I'm amazed that I got by without going into debt.

Q. Where was your temporary camp?

A. Town Hogan, we stayed there for about two months.

Q. What do you remember about it?

A. It seemed that we were constantly on the move. We couldn't get settled. I was lucky to move into the new barracks. Some married couples and singles had to live in the barns. It used to be a place for horses. It had been painted and cleaned up but when it rained it was a mess. I felt sorry for the people, who had to live in it.

The barracks where we stayed weren't too bad.

Q. What were your feelings there? Did you have to stand in a long line to get food?

A. Yes, it was a sad experience.

Q. Did you have any problem there?

A. No, not at Town Hogan. After we moved to Topaz the trouble started.

Q. Where?

Topaz in Utah.

Q. What happened there?

A. There was a conflict between the people who managed the camp and the people under them. The Christians were prosecuted as pro-Americans. There were many who came later who joined in the fights. I have heard that we were not as bad as Tule Lake Camp

Q. You mean there were fights between the pro-American and pro-Japan?

A. You are right.

Q. Was there the matter of the pledge?

A. The pledge? Oh, yes, I didn't listen to the short wave radio but there was someone who listened and explained that we should pledge to Japan. My children were American Citizens

I had no wish for the war to be won by America or Japan. I wished only that the war would end quickly. At that time my son was old enough to be drafted. I wished that he would not be sent to the Army. I didn't want him to go and fight in the Pacific. There were many meetings. In the mean time lots of the young men left the camp for the service.

Q. You thought that you should pledge to America because your children were American citizens?

A. Yes, I thought so.

Q. What were your thoughts at the time that your children went to the army.

A. My children served after the war.

Q. Was there trouble about the drafting of the Niseis (Second generation of Japanese.)

A. I wasn't happy about the draft but if it is an order you can not help it.

Q. Did you object to them serving in the Pacific?

A. Yes, I didn't like the idea of fighting with your own kind. My son served after the war. He had to take the Japanese language course and then he was sent to Japan as part of the occupation force. I had no worry about him.

A. Were your children too young to be drafted while you were in the camp?

A. My oldest son was old enough to be drafted.

Q. Did you do anything to prevent him from being drafted?

A. No, I didn't do anything.

Q. But as for yourself you didn't want him to go to war.

A. You are correct. I didn't want him to go to war.

Q. Did any Japanese organization the Japanese Counsel, or any churches gave you assistance when you had to evacuate?

A. I don't remember it if they did. They had to evacuate also.

The people who used to be in charge of the Japanese communities were sent to the camps far away from us. There were none to take charge of us. Some ministers tried to work things out for the Japanese. Minister Muto did much of the work that I remember.

Q. You mean the minister who passed away very recently.

A. Yes, he was in my camp. He was a leader. I recall the day that I had to leave for the camp, a lady who was my customer said to me "I'll take you to the station." and she waited outside. I made lots of rice balls early in the morning. I thought that perhaps we won't be fed for a long time. I put the rice balls in a box since I had cleaned my house thoroughly and I had nothing to wrap the rice balls with. Luckily I found some news papers so I wrapped the rice balls with them. The lady saw it and she thought that I was losing my mind. She told my children "Take care of your mother." and took us to the station. I carried my rice balls all the way to the camp.

Q. What did you do with your belongings?

A. We had an order that by a certain date we must clear our personal belongings. I left mine at the church in Alameda. We didn't come back here from the camp. We went to Chicago. The church sent my things to me which I had not really expected.

Q. What else happened in the camp?

A. Despite the pro-America and the pro-Japan the camp was rather peaceful and quiet. There were not many fights.

Q. Did you work?

A. Yes, I worked in the kitchen as a waitress. I received \$16. a month.

Q. Did you have a problem with money while you were in the camp?

A. No, I didn't. There was no need of money.

Q. How about the education of your children?

A. I worried about it. I wondered what we were going to do but we left for Chicago.

Q. When was this?

A. We went to Chicago in 1944. In 1945 the war was over.

Q. With four children what did you do in Chicago?

A. At that time three of my children were out of the camp before I was. I took the two younger boys with me. I couldn't afford to waste my time. I worked at the International House, a boarding house for students. I worked as a housekeeper.

Q. You lived in Chicago for eight years?

A. Yes, eight years. I stayed there until my youngest son finished high-school. Then we came back to California.

Q. What were the attitudes of the people in Chicago towards you?

A. Most of them had never seen Japanese before. They couldn't tell a Japanese from a Chinese. When I was there it was the middle of the war. I heard lots of propaganda from the store's loud speaker. I looked different from the other but I don't think that they could tell that I was a Japanese.

Q. Have you felt that you were segregated at any time?

A. No, I have not. That was the reason that lots of Japanese moved to Chicago and Minnesota. The thing I didn't like about Chicago was the winters. It was so cold. My son left there to enter the service.

Q. What do you remember about Chicago?

A. I had noticed that lots of Negroes lived there not like California.

Q. Did you experienced any difficulty in Chicago?

A. I remember that it was the first time that I went to a Presbyterian church there. It took me one hour to get there.

I happened to meet a friend in the church. I stopped at her house on the way home. I was late getting home. I didn't know how to use a phone. My children thought that something had happened to me. They looked all over for me. They thought that I was missing. I couldn't get home right away because I didn't have any transportation. Finally I found someone going my way and got a ride. My children were very worried.

Q. How old were the children then?

A. They were around eighteen or nineteen. They had finished high-school then, perhaps close to twenty.

Q. Did you go to the Presbyterian church in Chicago?

A. I did at first but it was too far away. I had started going to the new church on the south side. It was a United Japanese church.

Q. How much education did your children receive?

A. All of them attended junior colleges. My oldest son returned to Chicago and finished Roosevelt University. The other boy went to the service, after he returned he attended a small college in Los Angeles and graduated from it.

Q. What year did you come back to Calif. from Chicago?

A. In 1951. I got out of the camp in 1944 and stayed in Chicago for eight years so that makes it 1951? No, 1952.

Q. Where did you live?

A. We rented a small house in Sacramento.

Q. What made you live in Sacramento?

A. My oldest daughter who was married lived in Sacramento. Also my oldest son got a job at the State and lived in Sacramento. I wanted to be near them. The rest of my children and I moved to Sacramento.

Q. What were your thoughts on living in Sacramento?

A. I felt the difference between the people in a big city and the people in a small town. I felt that the people live in Sacramento were small minded compared with the people in Chicago, but later I liked Sacramento.

Q. I'll go back to the time of your husband's death. Did you feel helpless when he was seriously ill?

A. Yes, he complained of dizziness at first and tried to take it easy. A couple of days later he complained of severe headaches. When the Dr. arrived he was very ill. He had to go to the hospital in an ambulance. I was pregnant at the time. I couldn't go to the hospital to visit him often. I had a most difficult time then.

Q. He didn't live very long?

A. After he was in the hospital he did not live very long.

Q. What did you decide after his death?

A. I worried if we would be a burden to someone else. I had a little shop that my husband had started. I decided that it would be best if I ran the shop and make a living for my family.

Q. You mean that after two years of your husband's death you had a baby?

A. Two years? Heavens no! Two months. You don't think that I could have had his baby after two years (laughter)

Q. You couldn't work for a while then?

A. Fortunately I had relatives near by. They helped me.

Q. You had a brother-in-law and sister-in-law living near you?

A. Yes, besides some nieces. They all helped me. They were all devoted Christians and very nice people. They were rather quiet people. They belong to the church in Alameda. I am ever grateful to them.

Q. What was your husband like?

A. He was a straight forward and simple person. He joked a lot. He was a good man.

Q. Do you regret coming to America?

A. I'm grateful to God that we made our life here.

Q. It was rather hard to make a living as a woman alone?

A. You are right. I had some help. My in-law<sup>s</sup> helped me on financial matters. I really don't know what I would have done without them.

Q. Did you know how to run the business? Did you know how to purchase the flowers wholesale?

A. Yes. The wholesale market was operated by Japanese so that it wasn't hard.

Q. Did you know how much you should buy?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Looking back, when was the most difficult time of your life?

A. Perhaps the depression time.

Q. Your husband was still alive then?

A. Yes. The florists were hard hit from the beginning. It was a bad time for lots of the people all over America.

Q. Did you have trouble getting food?

A. No, I didn't experience any. I am grateful for it. Mostly it was hard mentally to struggle to make ends meet.

Q. It was hard mentally?

A. Yes, it was.

Q. You came here in 1952 and lived here ever since?

A. No, I lived on V St. at first.

Q. Was the place close to my church?

A. No, it was not too near the church.

Q. Did you live alone?

A. No, I lived with my children. My children left one by one. At one time I lived with only my oldest son. At one time I lived with the youngest son. This is the only time that I lived alone.

Q. How long have you lived here?

A. Around ten years by now. I don't know how long I can live here. The owner told me that he may sell this place. The children advise me to move into an apartment.

Q. You left Japan a long time ago. You had your share of hardships in America. Would you say that you are glad that you came to America?

A. Yes, I think so. I went back to Japan five years ago. I was glad when I got back to America?

Q. Why?

A. Japan was so crowded. Compared with Japan America is such a big country. You feel <sup>that</sup> you are free.

Q.. Do you have something to request to <sup>of</sup> the younger generation?

A. I would like them to shed the thought that they are Japanese. America has it's own good culture. I would like them to be good American citizens. I would like them to be good Christians too. I have told that to my grandchildren often. If you don't have the belief you are vulnerable. I want them to have a firm believe in God. From now on the younger generation is the main stream to carry our society. They are the one's who'll go in to all the different area of occupations. I wish them to have faith in God.

Q. What do you mean by good American citizens?

A. What I mean is a person who has respect from others.

Q. What is needed to be respected by others?

A. I would think that one needs to live by the bible. I heard on the radio just today, a young student asking Billy Graham about what he had heard of the conflicting theories about God of his friends, professors etc., Graham answered "Study the bible. The answers are in the book."

Q. Can you point out the good trait of the Japanese?

A. I think that the Japanese are considerate. Maybe I think so

because I am a Japanese.

Q. What do you think of the Americans as compared with the Japanese?

A. They seem open minded. It depends on the person too.

Q. What is a bad trait of the Japanese?

A. The opposite of the Americans. Often they don't say what they really think or feel. It depends on the person also.

Q. Don't you suppose that this is because the Japanese are trained to do so?

A. Yes, I think so.

Q. We have been taught that you should keep your feelings inside. Do you suppose that this is the reason?

A. Yes. A Japanese weighs other's feelings too much. Americans do not, but they seem get away with it. The Japanese society doesn't allow that kind of behavior. Sometimes Americans sound as if they are fighting but when it is over they are good friends again. Somehow Japanese can not do that.

Q. Would you like to see the young generation keep the old Japanese traditions?

A. Not all of them but I hope that they'll keep some of good traditions.

Q. For example?

A. A person who went to Japan very recently told me that the Japanese do not respect their elders, teachers, ministers and parents as they used to anymore. Their attitudes are different more friendly.

Q. Would you like to see them go back to the old way?

A. Yes, I would. I think that they understand themselves better that way.

Q. What would you like to teach the third generation. Do you have any thoughts when you see your grandchildren?

A. Let me see.... I have thought about mixed marriages. What do you think?

Minister. I would like to hear from you.

A. I suppose that it can't be helped.

Q. Would you like to see a Japanese marry a Japanese?

A. I would.

Q. Why?

A. There are the difficulties in customs, cultures, and attitudes when you marry a different race. It is difficult with relatives, in-laws and friends. I believe that a marriage goes smoothly when you marry your own kind. I can not say for sure because I have no experience in the matter. Although I must admit that for a Japanese to find a Japanese mate is hard these days that I know. There are many problems even when you marry your own race. There are lots of divorces but I think that a marriage will be peaceful if you marry your own kind.

Q. Looking back on your life now. There were many hardships that you encountered. What was the most important thing that helped you go through the difficulties? I am not stating the question very clearly. Did your parents teach you some important thing in life?

A. My parents taught me morals.

Q. The morals that you learned from your parents helped you in your life? Do you remember them?

A. Let me see. My father was born a long time ago. He used to quote lots of Chinese sayings "Everyone wishes that he had done more to please his parents after they are dead." A tree wishes to be still but can not do that against a blowing wind." I remember that he used to quote things like that.

Q. What do the poems suggest?

A. They suggest doing things the right away. Sometimes it is too late to do these things even if you want to.

Q. How about the tree?

A. It suggests similar happenings. There are times you are helpless to do what you wish.

Q. How about from your mother?

A. She often said "Do not mistake the importance of your neighbors. They are more helpful than your parents who live far from you." I remember that our parents spent much time

teaching our way of life. I wish that I could do the same for my grandchildren, unfortunately they don't understand my language.

Q. What do you notice about your grandchildren or the young generation in general?

A. They show more difference as they get older. When they were young they came running and shouted "Grandma!" and liked to chat about every thing with me. As they get older they say "Hi." and don't talk much to me.

Q. Doesn't that make you sad? What causes this do you think?

A. They develop their own interests. I have too many grandchildren to really feel sad. As they grow older they have their own interests. They don't need grandparents much anymore.

Q. How old is your oldest grandchild?

A. He is twenty five.

Q. How is he? Do the grandchildren want your attention more as they grow older?

Q. No, I don't think so. It depends on the child too. My daughter's oldest child is somewhat quiet. He doesn't say much. The other two are more talkative. It seems as they get older they have their own activities, school, friends, and they pay less attention to Grandmother. How old are your children?

Minister. One is six the other one is three.

Mrs. My! How the time flies! I'll bring some coffee. We'll take a break.

Compared to us the immigrants before us encountered many more difficulties. Things were much easier for us since my husband's father and mother were here.

Q. You mean your in-law were here?

A. Yes, they stayed in Oakland. I understand that my father-in-

Came here by himself at first. He wanted to be a successful business man and go back to Japan. My father-in-law owned a wine brewery once but he accumulated lots of bad debts and the business failed. He came here dreaming that he would strike it rich. His dreams fell short because of the language difficulty. He worked in a nursery for a while. My mother-in-law joined him later with two children, my husband and my sister-in-law. They lived here a while and then they went back to Japan.

Q. Did he strike it rich?

A. I don't think so. They paid back the money they owed. They both worked.

Q. Did their children remain here? Were they born here?

A. No, they were born in Japan.

Q. Were they like the first generation?

A. I think so.

Q. How about the language?

A. My husband came here when he was fourteen. He went to school here so that he could speak very good English.

Q. Like a Nisei (second generation)?

A. almost but not quite. He had some accent.

Q. Have you heard the stories about the early immigrants?

A. I heard that they had a hard time. I don't know the details but I understand that the hardest thing was that they didn't understand the language. They were full grown adults. They had no one to depend on. They had a hard time just buying groceries. The man who worked as a house boy told his friend "I am in a nice house. I have lots of meat to eat everyday." The friend went to see him one day and discovered that the man was fed by the meat waste which had been used as the soup meat. Lots of them were ignorant. They worked as cheap labour, \$2.00 or \$3.00 for a week. The early immigrants like my father-in-law seemed to have had lots of hard times.

Q. Have you heard of other unfortunate people?

A. The common problem used to be wife stealing. There was a shortage of Japanese females there-fore young Japanese men without wives used to run away with some one else's wife if he could. It was true. A man who received an ugly woman's picture as a prospect of a bride was comforted by his friend "You will have peace of mind. No one will run away with her."

Q. Is that a legendary story?

A. It is true.

Q. Were there some men who sent a handsome man's picture to his prospective bride insted of his own?

A. I heard that it happened. Mine was the true picture of him.

Q. You and your husband were not much different in age. Many men were much older then the women in those days, seventeen to twenty years.

A. Yes, I know, some of them looked like father and daughter. I imagine that was hard to live together but most of them got along O.K.

Q. Some of them run away?

A. Some. I watched the Japanese news last night. The young people wore the happi coats and demonstrated against inflation and Premier Tanaka's policy. They were carrying pla-cards.

Q. Did the young people demonstrate at Tule Lake also?

A. Don't ask me that. I wasn't at Tule Lake.

Q. Nothing happened at Topaze?

A. No, not at Topaze. I heard that lots of the anti-Americans were sent back to Japan then. We called them the "No, No," group.

Q. Do you know more stories of the Japanese immigrants' hardships?

A. I've forgotten many. They all laughed at the stupid stories of someone who couldn't understand English. The persons who laughed were not any better than the one's they laughed at.

Q. You didn't work harvesting grapes?

A. No, I didn't. The people who worked on the farms had the hardest times I hear.

Q. Have you or someone you know been <sup>u</sup>insl<sup>u</sup>ted by Caucasians?

A. No, I haven't been nor do I know anyone who has. I lived in town. I heard that the people who lived in the country had different difficulties.

Q. What were the difficulties of the people who lived in town?

A. There were difficulties in human relations and of economies. It was difficult to make ends meet.

Q. But there was no physical hardship?

A. You are right. Many men worked as house-boys or in the laundry business. I don't think that this is very hard work.

Q. You didn't do any domestic work here?

A. No, I did work in Chicago. My job was to clean the rooms. There were lots of Japanese like me who got out of the camp. I am rather optimistic person. I didn't feel that there were any difficulties in a strange city. I felt same way about the strange people.

Q. Can you open yourself to another person? I know that many Japanese can't.

A. I am rather straight forward. I say what I feel.

Minister. That is good.

Mrs. I believe that it is much easier to just say what you think. You get better result most of the time.

Minister. I agree. One of the bad trait of the Japanese is to not say what he really thinks and to keep a grudge a long time.

Mrs. Yes, I know. Some Japanese can not receive open comments well. They just can't be like the Caucasians. I read a book the other day. It was a story of a marriage consultant. In Japan he says "Japanese wives come and talk much but I can't really tell what they are consulting me about. They don't talk about what they really came about." (Talking to a friend)  
Mr. Niita, come Sunday I'll cook some noodles for you.

Mr.Niita. I'll come. Thank you.

Q. Mr. Niita, he came from Japan? He wasn't born here was he? He owns the ranch?

A. You are right. I really don't know how he came to own the ranch. He was a boss for the ranch hands that I know. He is a kind man and looks young so he keeps a mustach. He hopes that he looks older. His wife was laughing about that. I imagine you have recorded lots of Iseis\* (First generation) stories by now. How many do you have?

Minister. About fifty. We hope to get fifty more. I would like to gather as much as I can, as quickly as I can.

Mrs. You need to get persons who had different kinds of lives. It wouldn't be too interesting if they were all a like.

Minister. So far everyone is different. I have listened to fifty stories and they are all different.

Mrs. It is hard to find men. I suppose that they die before the women.

Did you record Mr. Yamamoto's story. He died not too long ago. He was ninety six or ninety five.

Minister. Mr.Yamamoto? I don't think so. Who is the oldest person at the Methodest church where you belong?

A. Mr. Takizawa, I believe. He is eighty six or five. You need a person who's memory is still good. I don't think that a senile person will do you much good.

Minister. That is true.

Mrs. Mr. Toyoji Inoue who died very recently <sup>was</sup> has a leader of the people who lived on the farms. He worked hard for the people's welfare. Too bad that he is no longer living.

Mr. Mizouchi is still living. I don't know whether he still has a good memory or not. Are there many Isei in the Presbyterian church?

Minister. I took all of the stories from them.

Mrs. There weren't any men?

Minister. Only Mr. Ituma.

Mrs. How about Mr. Maeda?

Minister. He is not well. He is in the hospital.

Mrs. Is that so. He is in the hospital. I didn't know.

Q. Do you know Mr. Wakita?

A. I didn't know him at first. He belonged to the church where I knew the Minister, Rev. Sakuma, it was in Chicago. I became aquanted with him through the church bullitain. The same way with Mr. & Mrs. Maeda. I visit them sometimes.

Minister. I should say good-by. I thank you very much.

Mrs. Don't mention it. I'll pray to God "Father in heaven, today Rev. Takarabe visted me and recorded my life story.

It was such an unfilled story but I thank you Lord that I was able to finish the story. Please bless Rev. Takarabe. Give him good health and strength so that he can complete this project. Give blessings to Rev. Takarabe's family. I trust that thee will be done. Amen."

Minister. Thank you.